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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Council Commends President, Plans Citizenship Conference

At the first meeting held since its organization in June, the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ sent messages of commendation and encouragement to ministers in Levittown, Pennsylvania, Little Rock, Arkansas, and other areas of racial tension. In a telegram to President Eisenhower, the Council urged continued protection of the rights of Negro school children in Little Rock. The telegram read as follows: "The Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ, meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 30, 1957, deplores the situation that required you to send federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas. We count on growing recognition by persons concerned for justice and good-will of the moral imperative involved in the desegregation of the public schools. We desire to register our strong approval of your action in that situation. We support you in maintaining sufficient federal forces to protect the civil rights of the Negro pupils in Central High School of Little Rock until there is convincing evidence that local and state authorities will carry out the court order and will insure the integrity of constitutional government."

Upon recommendation of its committee on economic life, the Council adopted a statement on Corruption in Labor and Management, the text of which appears elsewhere in this issue, and agreed to cooperate with the committees on Town and Country Church in a series of experimental conferences on the problems of the farmer. It approved plans of a special committee to cooperate with the Laymen's Fellowship and the Churchmen's Brotherhood in a Conference on the Churchman As a Citizen, to be held June 20-22, 1958.

In other actions, the Council approved a program of education in international relations, plans for the February Month of Emphasis, and the recommendations

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February Chosen as Month For Social Action Emphasis

In the seasonal calendars for the cultivation of churchmanship and the promotion of causes, both the Congregational Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed branches of the United Church have designated February as the Month of Emphasis for Christian Social Action.

While the manner of observance will vary from congregation to congregation as well as between the two constituencies, the Council for Christian Social Action takes pleasure in suggesting plans and in offering materials which may be used or adapted by all the churches within our united fellowship.

This issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY is conceived as a program guide or working manual for the pastor and the social action committee in your local church. We hope that every church can and will use some of the steps suggested.

The Council is preparing a popular promotional leaflet entitled *One In Faith and Action*. This will be available to churches, without cost, for mailing to their members at the beginning of the Month of Emphasis or for distribution to the worshiping congregation on the first Sunday in February.

An order card for this and other materials is enclosed with every copy of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY going to a pastor or local committee chairman. Kindly address your request to the office from which you received this publication and enclose your check for any items for which there is a charge.

Twelve Suggestions for Observing the Month of Emphasis

Plan a series of sermons interpreting the relation of the Gospel to economic life, race relations, social welfare, and international affairs.

Observe Race Relations Sunday, February 9, or plan an evening of interracial fellowship in which the congregation can participate.

Set up a group to study such books as *The Bible and Our Common Life, The Kingdom Beyond Caste, Mission in Brotherhood, In Every Place a Voice,* or *The Modern Samaritan.*

Study the community's needs and the church's program with the aid of such guides as *Some ABC's of Christian Social Action, The Social Ministry of the Local Church,* or *Your Church and Your Community.*

Distribute *One In Faith and Action* and other interpretative leaflets to all members and friends of the congregation.

Show *A Train of Action* or *What Happened to Hannah?* to stimulate awareness and discussion of the church's ministry to the community.

Make a special effort to bring into the life of the church, members of all racial and cultural groups represented in the community.

Organize an official committee on social action if you do not already have one and send names and addresses of its members to the New York (CC) or Cleveland (E&R) office of the Council for Christian Social Action.

Use *Social Action,* — for example, the December issue on "Prophetic Preaching,"—as the basis of a sermon or discussion.

Secure at least ten subscriptions to *Social Action* magazine for leaders in your church and for the members of your social action committee.

Send a special offering, through the regular channels, for the work of the Council for Christian Social Action.

Study the Report and Recommendations of the Council for Christian Social Action, to be published in the February issue of *Christian Community.*

Short But Sweet—A Message from the Director of The Council

February is the shortest month of the year but one of the best for Christian Social Action. The interdenominational Churchmen's Washington Seminar is usually held in February and in 1958 the dates are February 4-7. The Sunday prior to Lincoln's birthday is celebrated as Race Relations Sunday, and special worship and study materials are available from the National Council of Churches for use on February 9th. The Sunday before Washington's birthday is appropriately used as Citizenship Sunday. So the interests of race relations and Christian citizenship find special expression in February.

Among the Congregational Christian Churches the month of February has long been designated for special emphasis upon the work of the Council for Social Action. This is the period assigned to the CSA for special solicitation of individual gifts to its on-going program. Each year hundreds of loyal contributors who believe deeply in the purposes and need for vigorous social action make contributions ranging from ten dollars to one thousand.

Together, such gifts amount to nearly ten per cent of the total income of the CSA. For example, this amount is more than enough to pay CSA's share in the program of Church and Race carried on in cooperation with the Board of Home Missions. It is more than the CSA's share in the support of the Washington Office of the National Council of Churches and the National Council's program of race, international, social welfare, and economic relations. It is enough to provide ten grants to state conferences for part-time leadership for social action in the churches and associations. It is enough to pay the expenses for SOCIAL ACTION beyond the income from subscriptions and the entire printing cost for packets, leaflets, and CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY sent to the 958 social action chairmen, all pastors, and hundreds of social action members and workers.

If you are a Congregational Christian church member, send your gifts to the Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. If you are a member of an Evangelical and Reformed church, you may send a gift to the Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

This year the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church also has designated February for special educational emphasis upon social action. This issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY contains a number of practical suggestions on how this emphasis may be carried out in the local church.

February can be a month of opportunity for the minister and church in giving hope and faith to estranged and homeless Man. In a dehumanized society, Christian social action puts persons foremost and pays personal attention to the last forgotten refugee or migrant worker. Where there is loss of vital community and substitution of superficial forms, Christian social action brings together concerned church members who begin at the foot of the cross and then go forth on missions of mercy and enterprises for justice. Instead of anxiety and alienation, which seeks compensation in scape-goating, Christian social action grapples with social causation and the corporate influences which so largely shape our circumstance and produce our economic, international, and inter-group insecurities. When older loyalties topple and transmitted ideals crumble, Christian social action returns to the central experiences of Creation and Redemption and the Kingdom of God, which give us ever anew the bases for our freedom, security, social justice, and human brotherhood. Such Christian social action is not a peripheral aspect of Christian faith, nor an expendable fragment of the church program; it is the narrow gate that leads to salvation for Man and Mankind. It is an indispensable member of the Body of Christ. Any time this aspect of Christian life is discovered by church members is highly prized; and the shortest month of February can be sweetest of all if it helps church members caught in our impersonalized age to be *social,* and *active,* and *Christian.*

—Ray Gibbons

The Preacher's Program

Christian social action is not the sole theme of preaching, nor is preaching the sole channel for furthering Christian social action. Yet preaching is an important means for awakening concern, interpreting Christian responsibility, illuminating problems, and stimulating action.

Thus the preacher who seeks throughout the year to give his congregation a diet that is both rich and balanced will include both theological and devotional elements, personal counsel and social witness. He will, in the appointed season, and sometimes "out of season," remind his people of the place of stewardship and service responsibilities, of evangelism and missions. So, too, he will again and again be brought up against the problems of human welfare and race relations, or the issues of economic life and world politics.

Some ministers will wish to use the February Emphasis for a series of sermons on Our Christian Responsibility in Society, or Christian Perspectives—on social, racial, economic, and international problems. Others, who follow the traditional church year more closely, will find in the gospel lessons insights that challenge our accepted social values —and lead us to seek to realize God's righteousness in all of life.

The December issue of SOCIAL ACTION (25c, or $2.00 per year) contains articles and comments on "Prophetic Preaching," by Robert Spike, Walter Press, Avery Post, and others. The Worship Resource sections of other issues contain scripture selections, texts, and topics which offer further suggestions. What better introduction to the Lenten season, with its message of repentance and evangelism, than worship and preaching which recognizes Christ's lordship over the whole of life and helps men and women ask what that involves?

Council Commends President, Plans Citizenship Conference

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of the Executive Committee to conduct four regional institutes and two study tours—to Europe and Mexico, respectively—during the summer of 1958.

All the relevant actions and recommendations of the United Council were ratified or approved in separate meetings by the Council for Social Action (CC) and the Commission on Christian Social Action (E&R). The midwinter meetings of the three agencies will be held at Buck Hill Falls, Pennsylvania in January.

MATERIALS FOR DISTRIBUTION

As announced on page one of this issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, the Council for Christian Social Action has prepared a new interpretive folder, entitled *One in Faith and Action* for use in our churches. It tells briefly what the Council is, who the people are who make it up, what services it renders for the churches, and how the local church and church member can have a part in Christian social action.

This flier will be available without charge for distribution in our churches during the month of February. Some churches will include it in their monthly mailing to members and friends. Some will distribute it at the church door with the Sunday Bulletin. It will remind the church member of an important aspect of our church life.

Some churches may wish to distribute an informative piece of literature on *each* of the four Sundays in February. For these we suggest the following:

February 2 — *One in Faith and Action* (free)
February 9—*Race Relations Sunday Message* (NCC, 4c each, $2 per 100)
February 16—*Together* (free)
February 23—*Why Does the Church Concern Itself with Social Problems* (CCSA, $2.50 per 100)

All of these may be ordered from the Council, with the exception of the Race Relations Sunday Message. *The latter should be ordered from the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, National Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.*

Note: Evangelical and Reformed churches may wish to order from the Cleveland office in addition to the above, the General Synod statement, *A Christian Approach to Race Relations.*

Using Visual Aids

There are a number of motion pictures and filmstrips which lend themselves to social education and action. (CCSA has such a list available on request). We mention two at this time because of their special usefulness for highlighting Christian social action during the Month of Emphasis.

One of these is the 28-minute sound motion picture, *A Train of Action* (Color, $12). Produced by the Bureau of Audio-Visual Aids in cooperation with the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, this film shows how an established church in a medium-sized city became aware of its community and made its outreach felt—in housing, in citizenship, in an inclusive ministry.

The other is a film strip, *What Happened to Hannah?,* (17 min., $2.50), produced by the Department of Social Welfare of the National Council of Churches. It reflects the range of welfare problems which challenge the church to a creative, concerned social ministry.

Both lend themselves well to discussions leading to program study and action. *They may be rented from the Missions Council* (287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10; 14 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Mass.; or 19 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 8, Ill.) *or the Bureau of Audio-Visual Aids* (1505 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa. and 1720 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis 3, Missouri).

Study Resources

Two kinds of study are included among the suggestions for February—good any time during the year. One is the sort of social education program we usually think of when we organize a study group, set up a Church Night or a Lenten School of Religion, or encourage an existing class or organization to "dig" into a special topic and become better informed. We may inquire into the social teachings of the Bible, or review the findings of a National Study Conference, or examine some report of the World Council of Churches. This year many groups will be interested in the Home Missions Study theme, "Christ, the Church, and Race."

Among the resources which may be used in such groups are:

In Every Place a Voice, by Walter Muelder, 65c (The ecumenical movement and the local church).
Kingdom Beyond Caste, by Liston Pope, $1.25 (Home Mission text).
Mission in Brotherhood, 35c (Denominational supplement to home mission study text).
The Bible and Our Common Life, by Huber F. Klemme, $1.75 cloth; $1.25 paper. (Social teachings of the Bible).
The Modern Samaritan, by Clair M. Cook, 35c (Survey of social problems).

The other kind of study is a more original and action-directed approach to a problem about which the group is in a position to do something immediately. We may ask what the church's opportunity in social action and social welfare is. Helpful hints are fund in:

Some ABC's of Christian Social Action, by F. Nelsen Schlegel, 20c
The Social Ministry of the Local Church, by Muriel S. Webb, 25c

Still better, an official committee on Christian social action, or unofficial group of concerned people, might make a study of the needs of the community and the responsibility of the church in relation to it. For such a survey we suggest *Your Church and Your Community,* by Huber F. Klemme, $1.75 cloth; $1.25 paper.

Even if your church does not have a standing committee on Christian social action, it would do well to appoint a study committee or a "task force" to look the field over. It may uncover data that are disturbing, salutary, and most essential to the integrity of the church!

Race Relations Sunday

Race Relations Sunday, February 9, offers the resourceful pastor, committee, and church board many opportunities for deepening the church's understanding of and commitment to the Gospel in its all-inclusive outreach. Many pastors have found it valuable to arrange a pulpit exchange with a minister of another racial or cultural group. Some have introduced their congregations or their church schools to musicians, choirs, or speakers who represent a different group.

Ideally, of course, there would be no need for Race Relations Sunday observances, for our churches and our communities would be racially inclusive and every service would celebrate our unity in Christ. In a growing number of churches, this has become possible.

In situations where the cultural homogeneity of the church or its community has retarded such inclusiveness, an evening of interracial fellowship may be planned in cooperation with another church. Introductions, brief statements on a common theme or a community need, group singing, and person-to-person communication around the coffee table may be all that the occasion requires. Or, in a smaller group, a lively informal discussion does much to break down restraints.

If you cannot arrange an inter-racial meeting, this may be a good time to show a film like *The Broken Mask* (28 min., $12 color; B&W $8) or a filmstrip like *Crossroads at Cedarmont* (60 frames, $1). These may be rented from the Missions Council or The Bureau of Audio-Visual Aids.

Recommendations Available for Study

Opportunity will be given all local churches in the two uniting communions to study the reports and recommendations of the Council for Christian Social Action.

It has been customary for the synods of the Evangelical and Reformed Church to receive each spring the report of the Commission on Christian Social Action with recommendations for action. In planning together it seemed good to the Council for Social Action that the same information and suggestions should be transmitted to the conferences and associations for their consideration.

In order that the representatives to these bodies may be better prepared to act, it has been agreed that the jointly prepared report shall be published in the February issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY and that copies of this issue shall be made available at cost to the churches for study and action by church councils, consistories, or other groups.

Here is another good suggestion for making February Christian Social Action Month in your church. Order a quantity of this issue, at one dollar per dozen, and go to work on the resume of Council activities and its resolutions on race relations, international affairs, and related subjects.

Statement on Corruption In Labor and Management

Adopted by the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ, October 30, 1957

Within recent months, the attention of the nation has been called to the hearings of the Senate Select Committee on Labor and Management Practices, of which Senator McClellan is chairman and Mr. Robert Kennedy the chief staff officer. Testimony at these hearings has alleged the existence of unethical practices on the part of certain labor officials and representatives of business which have involved financial loss for those whose trust they abused and occasioned grave concern for the moral health of our society.

As a Christian body, committed to the conviction that God wills justice in all areas of human life, we express our unequivocal disapproval of those leaders who take advantage of their positions in labor organizations to enrich themselves, to defraud or misrepresent their constituents, or to wield irresponsible power over them. And we condemn those unions, local or national, which knowingly have permitted such individuals to exercise power or have failed to maintain ethical standards and democratic procedures.

At the same time, we would remind all fair-minded persons that, evil as is any corruption in so important a social and economic movement, the persons and the unions charged with having engaged in illegal or questionable practices constitute a very small segment of labor taken as a whole. We note with appreciation the history-making steps taken by organized labor to establish a code of ethical practices; to discipline unions which have come under corrupt, dictatorial, or irresponsible dominance; and to cooperate with the Select Committee in ascertaining the facts about mismanagement and corruption where they were suspected or known to exist. We commend the vast majority of union members who have labored to make of their unions a force for economic justice, social progress, and democratic community life. And we affirm our conviction that labor unions contribute both economically and morally to our modern industrial society.

We would further point out that the responsibility for corruption and racketeering does not lie exclusively with union officials who "sell out" their unions. It lies equally with those, in management or elsewhere, who have bought favors from such officials or who, not engaging in such behavior themselves, tacitly approve such practices by the industry, trade, or profession in which they are engaged. And, ultimately, the responsibility is shared by all of us who participate and acquiesce in those aspects of our society which put a premium on the making of maximum profits and the manipulation of man, in disregard of moral ends or human costs.

Those who have broken the law should have a fair trial and pay the prescribed penalty. But these disquieting disclosures will have been to no effect if they do not lead us all to repentance and to new dedication to the development of the "responsible society."

SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

January 2-3—CCSA Executive Committee, New York.

January 6-16—Puerto Rican Study Tour, Galen Weaver, Director.

January 19-26—Church and Economic Life Week.

January 29-31—Council for Christian Social Action Meeting, Buck Hill Falls Inn, Cresco, Pennsylvania.

February—Christian Social Action Month of Emphasis, United Church of Christ.

February 4-7 — Churchmen's Washington Seminar, Washington, D. C.

February 9—Race Relations Sunday.

February 11-13—Southern Christian Social Action Institute, Avon Park, Florida.

April 15-17—CCSA Washington Seminar.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

News and Program Service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ
Ray Gibbons, Director
Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director and Editor

Sent free to pastors and social action committees.

Group subscriptions, 10 or more to one address, 50 cents each.

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General communications and orders from Evangelical and Reformed churches should be addressed to the Editor, Council for Christian Social Action, 2969 W. 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Congregational Christians should order from Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

The Council for Christian Social Action unites the work of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.